



UNITED STATES SENATE  
**REPUBLICAN  
POLICY COMMITTEE**

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*Missile Defense: One Important Tool for Homeland Defense*

## **Homeland Defense: A U.S. Priority**

In the wake of the recent terrorist attacks on America and its people, some have argued that missile defense should no longer be a priority for the United States. They argue that missile defense would be ineffective against a primary threat like that the world witnessed on Tuesday, September 11, 2001 — a barbaric attack against our citizens using our commercial airliners. And they would be right.

However, we live in a complex and dangerous world. Today, there is no single “primary” threat. There is also no way to calculate with any certainty the likelihood of one threat versus another. We must defend against the full range of threats. We do not have the luxury to choose what threats we will face. If we make such a false choice, we know from experience that we will be proved wrong.

Our sympathies and prayers are with those who lost their lives in this terrorist act of war perpetrated against America. Our hopes are with those who survived. Our gratitude is bestowed upon all of the courageous volunteers and rescue workers — some who gave their own lives — in the rescue and recovery efforts. The fight against terrorism has been and will remain a top national security priority.

The federal government spent nearly \$12 billion last year on counterterrorism. Even more must be done. In May of this year, President Bush created a major initiative, appointing Vice President Cheney to oversee the development of a coordinated national effort to expand and integrate the myriad federal, state, and local government tasks to protect our nation against any uses of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). In addition, the President has asked the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to create an Office of National Preparedness. This Office will be responsible for implementing many of the recommendations of the national effort overseen by Vice President Cheney. Specifically, it will coordinate all federal programs dealing with weapons of mass destruction.

While the Bush Administration works to improve our counterterrorism and preparedness capabilities to counter the full range of threats, including the potential use of weapons of mass destruction, it is clear that implementation of a limited missile defense system to protect the U.S. homeland is now even more compelling.

In addition to defending against the potential terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction in the United States, we also need missile defense because countries like Iran and North Korea are making enormous efforts to acquire and develop long-range ballistic missiles for terror and blackmail. Ballistic missiles are also a serious threat to U.S. security. Missiles already have been used as a tool for terror and coercion. For instance, during the Gulf war, Iraq's Saddam Hussein targeted Israeli citizens by launching dozens of missiles into Tel Aviv and other cities. In the "War of the Cities" during the 1980's, both Iraq and Iran launched hundreds of missiles at cities in both countries terrorizing the people of both nations.

The list of countries aggressively pursuing long-range missiles includes a number of states for whom terror and blackmail are a way of life. These are also countries that support terrorism. Countries like Iran, Iraq, Libya, and North Korea are devoting scarce resources to their missile programs while their people starve in some cases.

The leaders of these rogue states have shown a willingness to take gambles in the past that have cost their countries and their people dearly. Given that they will be difficult to deter, we must protect against deterrence failure. We need an insurance policy against the attack of our cities from these sources and from others who might acquire and use a missile against us without the authorization of the possessing state.

Biological weapons used by terrorists or rogue states represent another primary threat to the United States. Today, according to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, there are at least 13 countries that we know of pursuing biological weapons of increasing sophistication and lethality.

Although polls show most Americans believe the United States has missile defenses capable of defending the country, the fact of the matter is that we have no defense against a missile attack on our homeland. While we do have defenses against shorter-range missiles to protect our overseas forces and allies, we have none against even a single missile launched at our own cities. We must fill this void in our defenses.

The recent terrorist attacks against the United States have forced us to deal with the threats we face today. We no longer may comfortably rule out threats because we believe our enemies would never dare attack us in any particular fashion. We must not find ourselves in the position of having to answer why, following a catastrophic missile attack against one of our cities, we had chosen to do nothing when we knew the possibility presented a real threat.

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